

RADIO TV REPORTS, INC.

4435 WISCONSIN AVENUE, N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20016 244-3540

FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

PROGRAM NBC Sunday Night News STATION WRC TV
NBC Network

DATE January 25, 1976 6:30 PM CITY Washington, D. C.

SUBJECT An Interview with CIA Director William Colby

JOHN HART: William Colby will leave the CIA this week. He was removed as Director last fall, but he stayed on until his successor, George Bush, could take over. He has spent his life in intelligence work, and he's in our Washington studio to talk about that and other things.

First of all, Mr. Colby, what are you going to do now?

CIA DIRECTOR WILLIAM COLBY: Well, I think I'll write a book about intelligence, about modern intelligence. I'd like to put a new meaning for the initials CIA -- Constitutional Intelligence in America.

HART: Now it's been your job to know about all that can be known, I guess, about American security. I'd like to ask you how secure the United States is in the world and how strong our defenses are at this moment?

DIRECTOR COLBY: Well, I think my job is to know about the rest of the world, not how strong the U. S. defenses are. I think the rest of the world poses a threat to us. As we look abroad around the world, there are great nations which are not friendly to us. They have large weapon systems that can destroy our country. There are increasing troubles between the gap between population and food and the jealousies that can start conflicts in various parts of the world.

It's a dangerous world and we must be aware of it and know about it in order to defend ourselves.

HART: Would you tell us where the greatest threat comes from at this moment?

OFFICES IN: NEW YORK • LOS ANGELES • CHICAGO • DETROIT • AND OTHER PRINCIPAL CITIES

Material supplied by Radio TV Reports, Inc. may be used for file and reference purposes only. It may not be reproduced, sold or publicly demonstrated or exhibited.

-2-

DIRECTOR COLBY: Well, the greatest threat, I think, is the growing gap in the population and food over the long term. The greatest military force we face, of course, is the Soviet Union, without a shadow of a doubt. Another problem, however, is the increasing tendency of a lot of countries around the world to go their own way instead of cleaving together in some kind of common effort.

HART: Is the Soviet Union stronger than we are militarily?

DIRECTOR COLBY: I think we're both very strong and both strong enough to defend ourselves.

HART: What are our weaknesses, do you think, in this new world since the end of the Vietnam war?

DIRECTOR COLBY: Well, again, I think I would talk about the relationships abroad. I think there're a lot of countries that are looking at us today with considerable doubt as to the will of America, whether we are prepared to stay the course, or whether we're going to go off on another isolationist binge the way we did during the 1920s and early '30s and when we said that places in Africa and Asia were too far away to bother us. And we ignored them until we had to fight a large war about them.

HART: You know, there are people in Washington who believe that the international problem in the coming years will not be East versus West so much as terrorist versus the rest of us. And I think you kind of alluded to that earlier. What do you think about that?

DIRECTOR COLBY: Well, I think terrorism is a very serious problem. We have a very delicately tuned civilization now and it can be thrown out of whack by a grain of sand or a small explosion someplace. We also have this frightening danger of nuclear proliferation where any little country could develop its own atom bomb.

HART: Do you see the CIA in its work against terrorism growing in the coming years?

DIRECTOR COLBY: We've devoted considerable effort to this, and we've managed to frustrate several terrorist attempts around the world. I see that continuing.

HART: I don't suppose you could talk about more specifically what frustrations you've been able to achieve.

DIRECTOR COLBY: Oh, no, I can't give the details, because

-3-

that begins to expose the sources. And that's one of our great troubles right now is whether we're able to keep the confidence of the foreigners who really are willing to work with us, but don't dare to if their names or their cooperation is going to be exposed.

HART: Mr. Colby, do you have to observe Americans overseas in this work?

DIRECTOR COLBY: No, the Americans overseas are generally not of any interest to us, unless some foreign intelligence service tries to recruit them, to turn them against us.

HART: I have to ask you this because it came up in tonight's news. Is the CIA still supplying information to foreign intelligence agencies on Americans overseas, travelling abroad?

DIRECTOR COLBY: Well, I don't think it's so much a matter of supplying intelligence on Americans. But if we have a request from the FBI or somebody to look into the activities of some potential subversive, we may ask some friendly service to help us on that problem instead of doing it ourselves. We obviously have to identify who we're talking about.

HART: So the ending of Operation Chaos does not mean the ending of that operation?

DIRECTOR COLBY: It doesn't mean the ending of all counterintelligence, because there still are hostile intelligence services trying to recruit Americans and turn them against their country.

HART: Mr. Colby, your business is trustworthy information, and a lot of journalists think that that's their business too. You have said that the CIA is still using parttime reporters, stringers overseas as agents. And it seems to many people in the journalism business that that compromises our efforts at trustworthy information.

Is it -- is what you're getting worth the damage it does journalism?

DIRECTOR COLBY: Well, I think this is a fundamental problem for our country, Mr. Ford [sic]. We believe we have to run an intelligence service. But we've reached a situation where every single group says that it wants to be excluded -- the Peace Corps, the foundations, the AID, the U. S. I. A., the Fulbright, and so forth. And if you run this far enough, you can end up with nobody to work with at all.

HART: Well, news executives told me this week that not

-4-

only does it compromise our business, but also it may endanger our people working overseas.

DIRECTOR COLBY: Well, I don't think that intelligence people working overseas are free of danger. But, no, I don't think we take risks that are not proper. We're very careful with this. And as I've pointed out, we do not use any full-time employees of any of our major news organizations. We lay off those. The only thing we do is the odd fellow who makes a living in some foreign capital selling a little story here and there -- we may also be able to use him.

HART: And I take it this is going to continue.

DIRECTOR COLBY: It would continue unless I received instructions to the contrary. And I've received none.

HART: I wish we could go on, Mr. Colby, but our time is up. Thank you so much for coming.

DIRECTOR COLBY: Thank you very much.

HART: Thank you very much.